

Andrew Jackson to John Sevier, May 10, 1797, from Correspondence of Andrew Jackson. Edited by John Spencer Bassett.

TO JOHN SEVIER.¹

1 Copy. See the *Am. Hist. Mag.* (Nashville), V. 120.

Nashville, May 10 1797

Sir: Your letter of the 8th instant has recd every consideration which I have been able to give, and be assured Sir that your sentiments and ideas upon abstract principles entirely accord with my own. Facts may be mistated, and it is not improbable they were in the instance before us. I can assure you Sir that at the time the expressions were made use of by me in the case of the election, I was neither your *political* nor *private* enemy, nor am I yet inclined to be so, but I feel the sweetness and necessity of protecting my feelings and reputation whenever they are maliciously injured as sensibly as yourself or any other person.

It is with pleasure sir that I now remark to you that I think you had no *malicious* design to injure my reputation and that your letters proceeded from the warmth of the moment. That you were not actuated by party spirit I hope and am willing to believe was the case, though I can assure you Governor Sevier that when I saw Mr Joel Lewis making use of your private Letter for a public purpose I had a right to think otherwise.

Far be it from me to think Sir that for any errors in the discharge of your duties you are answerable except in a constitutional manner but for malicious slander all men ought to be answerable at the bar of honor. This I hope applies to neither of us in the present case. Permit me to request sir in future that as far as it respects myself you will pay some

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attention to the essential distinction between observations invol[v]ing your political conduct by way of *argument* ; and such as are malicious and personal.

In regard to the conduct of Mr Lewis I have nothing to say in this letter except that as by his producing your private letter to *answer his own purpose* it unavoidably brought your political conduct in view. If Mr Lewis produced the letter without your approbation he is answerable to you and not to me. One thing is certain and needs no demonstration from the nature of the transaction itself; that the warmth of argument originated between Mr Lewis and myself upon this subject no doubt Mr Lewis is pretty well informed, if he is not he may be.

From the impressions I now hold Sir I can assure you that it will give me pleasure, to converse personally with you upon this or any other, subject. Be pleased therefore to state some particular time when I can see you at your own room.